

# COMPASS

## Placement Testing

### What is the COMPASS Placement Test?

---

- The COMPASS Placement Test is a computerized test that determines where you begin your studies at SSC, and your readiness for college level courses.
- It is important that you do your very best.
- The results will determine if you are college ready or developmental courses are required.
- Developmental courses will add time and money to earning a degree or certificate.

### Do I Have to Take the COMPASS Placement Test?

---

- All new students entering college for the first time need to take the Placement Test, unless exempt based on previous college credit or ACT scores.
- Students can only take the Placement Test after they have completed an Admission application.
- Students must wait 24 hours after completing the Admission application before they are allowed to take the COMPASS Placement Test.
- Students will be given a packet of review materials from Admissions, and are encouraged to review it before testing.
- Students can contact Counseling at (708) 596-2000, ext. 2306 to schedule an appointment with a counselor for an evaluation.

### Where do I take the COMPASS Placement Test?

---

- The COMPASS Placement Test is given in The Assessment Center, located on the second floor of the main campus in room 2266.
- No appointment is needed. Walk-in testing is available Monday through Thursday between 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Last start time to test is 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 1:00 p.m. on Fridays to ensure adequate time to complete testing.

### What ACT scores will I need to be exempt from COMPASS Placement Testing?

---

- Your ACT scores in Reading, Writing and Math may exempt you from taking the COMPASS Placement Test.
- Use the table on the next page to determine whether a combination of your ACT scores and your high school grades will exempt you from taking one or more parts of the COMPASS Placement Test.
- If you believe you should be exempt from taking one or more parts of the COMPASS Placement Test based upon your ACT scores, you must make an appointment to see a counselor to waive the appropriate part of the test.
- NOTE: Reading & Math ACT scores are good for placement 3 years from date of test. English ACT scores are good for placement 2 years from date of test.

| Academic Area | ACT Subject Score | + | High School Requirement                | = | SSC Placement       |
|---------------|-------------------|---|--|---|---------------------|
| Reading       | 20                |   |  | = | No Reading Required |
| English       | 20                |   |  | = | ENG 101             |
| Math          | 19-20             | + | Passing grades in Algebra I & Geometry | = | MTH 097 or MTH 100  |
|               | 21-22             | + | Grades of "C" or above in Algebra II   | = | MTH 115 or MTH 126  |
|               | 23 or above       | + | Grades of "C" or above in Algebra II   | = | MTH 145 or MTH 165  |

## What areas will I be tested on?

- The COMPASS Placement Test consists of three sections: English, Reading and Math.
- You may take the complete test in one day, or break the testing areas up over multiple days.
- Students will start with the Math section of the Placement Test.

## How does the COMPASS Placement Test work?

- It is important to understand that the COMPASS Test is "adaptive" to how you answer the given questions. Depending on the number of correct or incorrect answers, the test will move up or down adjusting to your answers.
- The more answers you get correct, the more you move up. If you miss several in a row, it will adjust, or move down.
- In Math you will start out at the Algebra level.

## Should I study for the COMPASS Placement Test?

- Yes. Preparation can save you time and money.
- The COMPASS Placement Test determines whether or not you can take college-level courses, or if you need to complete developmental courses before taking college-level coursework. Preparing yourself for the COMPASS Placement Test by reviewing and taking practice tests can save you time and money.
- Based on your placement scores, there are up to three levels of English, three levels of Reading, and five levels of Developmental Math courses that may be required.
- Each developmental course you place into will cost you extra time and money to complete and also uses up your financial aid eligibility.
- It is important that you are prepared in order to place in the highest level possible.
- The following chart shows the time and money required for each developmental course at SSC.

| Developmental Math Course                | Length of Course                       | Number of Hours Billed       | Cost                             | College Credit Earned                    |
|--|--|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Math 085                                 | One Semester                           | 3                            | \$377.25                         | No                                       |
| Math 091                                 | One Semester                           | 3                            | \$377.25                         | No                                       |
| Math 093                                 | One Semester                           | 3                            | \$377.25                         | No                                       |
| Math 095                                 | One Semester                           | 4                            | \$502.00                         | No                                       |
| Math 097/100                             | One Semester                           | 4                            | \$502.00                         | No                                       |
| <b>Total Courses:</b><br>5 Developmental | <b>Total Semesters:</b><br>5 (2 Years) | <b>Credit Hours Used:</b> 17 | <b>Total Cost:</b><br>\$2,135.75 | <b>College Credit Hours Earned:</b> None |

| Developmental English Course              | Length of Course                          | Number of Hours Billed          | Cost                              | College Credit Earned                        |
|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| English 097                               | One Semester                              | 3                               | \$377.25                          | No   |
| English 098                               | One Semester                              | 3                               | \$377.25                          | No   |
| English 099                               | One Semester                              | 3                               | \$377.25                          | No   |
| <b>Total Courses: 3<br/>Developmental</b> | <b>Total Semesters:<br/>3 (1 ½ Years)</b> | <b>Credit Hours<br/>Used: 9</b> | <b>Total Cost:<br/>\$1,131.75</b> | <b>College Credit<br/>Hours Earned: None</b> |

| Developmental Reading Course              | Length of Course                          | Number of Hours Billed           | Cost                              | College Credit Earned                        |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Reading 080                               | One Semester                              | 3                                | \$377.25                          | No   |
| Reading 081                               | One Semester                              | 4                                | \$502.00                          | No   |
| Reading 082                               | One semester                              | 3                                | \$377.25                          | No   |
| <b>Total Courses:<br/>3 Developmental</b> | <b>Total Semesters:<br/>3 (1 ½ Years)</b> | <b>Credit Hours<br/>Used: 10</b> | <b>Total Cost:<br/>\$1,256.50</b> | <b>College Credit<br/>Hours Earned: None</b> |

## Guide to Successful Placement Testing

- You must wait 24 hours from the time you complete the Admission application before you can test in order to review.**
- You will be given review materials to help you improve your placement.**
- There are several ways to accomplish this:**
  - Access the ACT COMPASS website for sample questions.**
    - Go to [www.act.org/compass/tests](http://www.act.org/compass/tests)**
    - On the COMPASS Tests page, you can now click on each test, Reading, Writing Skills and Mathematics.**
    - Once you click on each link for Reading, Writing Skills, and Mathematics on the COMPASS test page, click on the link for "Sample Test Questions" for each area found on that page.**
    - On the Mathematics test page, you will find links for sample math test questions for numerical skills/pre-algebra and algebra AND college algebra, geometry and trigonometry.**
    - The correct answers for each set of sample questions are provided at the end of each test.**
- additional math review. Take advantage of these worksheets as this will help increase your recall of problem solving that you may not have practiced in some time.**
- On the day of the test, make sure of the following:**
  - You have a government issued picture I.D. with you. You cannot test without a picture I.D.**
  - You are physically, emotionally and mentally ready to test which means:**
    - You are not exceptionally tired or hungry.**
    - You are not feeling sick.**
    - Your mind is not preoccupied with another important matter.**
    - You are not in a hurry.**
    - You have at least three hours to devote to this test.**
- Additional Testing may be required.**
  - ENGLISH: If you do not score into college-level English on the English portion of the COMPASS exam, you will be required to write an essay.**
    - Your essay score will determine your placement in either college-level English or a developmental English course.**

Additional Math Study Guides are available in Admissions, Testing or Counseling. These purple and orange study guides were developed by the Math department to provide

- B. Before beginning the Essay test, carefully read the directions on the front of the writing sample form.
- **MATH:** If you do not score into Math 095 or higher, you will be required to take a second math test (ALEKS) to determine your math placement.

- A. ALEKS will test your abilities in signed numbers, fractions, decimals and percents.
- B. You will not be able to use a calculator for this portion of the test. Scratch paper and a pencil will be provided for you.

**How the ALEKS Test Works:**

1. The test will be done completely on a computer.
2. You will answer between 25 and 35 questions.
3. Questions are NOT multiple choice—you will type in each answer.
4. You may use a calculator only if one pops up on the screen.
5. Be sure that you understand everything you see on the tutorial. Ask a testing staff member if you have a question or don't understand something before you begin the actual test.
6. Do not guess—if you have no idea how to solve the problem, click "I don't know."
7. Work problems out on paper—do not attempt to answer a question in your head.

MTH 085



MTH 091



MTH 093



MTH 095



MTH 097



**Non-College Credit Course**

**General Education Course**

If you have a disability for which you may need special accommodations for testing, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSDO) at (708) 596-2000, ext. 2572, room 2268. For the hearing impaired, call the TDD at (708) 596-2000, ext. 2573.



**SOUTH  
SUBURBAN  
COLLEGE**

15800 S. State St.  
South Holland, IL 60473  
www.ssc.edu

**Board of Trustees**

- Frank M. Zuccarelli, Chairman*  
John A. Daly, Vice-Chair • Anthony P. DeFilippo  
Katie Jackson Booker • Jacqueline Martin  
Terry R. Wells • Joseph Whittington Jr.